

IX.—*Excavations at some Wiltshire Monasteries.* By HAROLD
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Read 14th December 1922.

WILTSHIRE had at the Suppression fifteen religious houses, of which six were of over £200 a year value and escaped the first attack by King Henry VIII. One had licence to continue. With the exception of five they were all in the northern half of the county, and six were in the Avon valley between Bath and Malmesbury.

It has always been the hope of the writer to deal with this group in detail as he was able to do with three of them, Lacock, Stanley, and Malmesbury; but time passes, and it does not seem likely that opportunity will arise for any extensive excavations to be made on the sites except perhaps in one case. Therefore, so that the researches already made may not be altogether lost, this paper is laid before the Society with a very sincere apology for its incompleteness.

BRADENSTOKE PRIORY

The priory of Bradenstoke is placed, in the unusual position for a monastic house, on the top of a hill on the east side of the Avon river some six miles north-east of Chippenham. The remaining fragment of the priory can be seen from a great distance, and the view from it extends over three counties. In spite of the elevated position, the indispensable necessity of every monastery, water, wells up within the precinct in vast quantities that have never been known to fail.

The priory was founded in 1142 by Walter of Salisbury, for canons of the order of St. Augustine, and was hallowed in honour of our Lady.¹ The eastern part of the church and the buildings round the cloister were doubtless erected with little delay. The house was richly endowed by the founder, who, after the death of his wife, became one of the canons. He and his wife were buried in

¹ *Mon. Ang.* (London, 1849), vi, 337.

the same grave *juxta presbyterium*. His son William, who was father of Ela, countess of Salisbury, founder of Lacock Abbey, was buried with his wife Elinor under a marble slab *juxta vestibulum*.¹

In the thirteenth century a new aisle and porch were added to the nave of the church, after which the claustral buildings seem to have been rebuilt, and this rebuilding was continued gradually until the completion of the western range in the early part of the fourteenth century. The great barn was built at the end of that century.

A western tower was added to the nave at the end of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century. Later in the fifteenth century a chapel was added on the south side of the nave, east of the porch. The prior's lodging was remade by Prior Thomas Walshe about 1490.

In 1535 'the king's visitors' came to Bradenstoke 'where after exact and diligent inquisition we coulde not prove any cryme ageinst the Prior but ij or thre of the convent were found convict of incontinencie'.²

The house was valued at £270 10s. 8d., so it escaped the suppression of smaller houses only to share their fate four years later, on the 18th January 1539, when there were thirteen canons and a prior.³ The prior, William Snow, was appointed first dean of Bristol by the charter founding that see on 4th June 1542, and it is interesting to find that the head of another Wiltshire house, Edington, was made the first bishop.⁴ Bradenstoke was granted to one William Pexhill in exchange,⁵ and since then has passed through many hands.

John Aubrey, the Wiltshire antiquary, was familiar with the remains of this priory as they existed in his day, and it is a pity he says so little about them. In his collections the references are very slight, and most of his short notes refer to wild ideas of the name of the place which is known locally as Clack. However, he tells us,

At Broadstock Abbey is an overshot mill. . . . Broad-Hinton House, Bromham House, and Cadnam House were built of the Ruines of Bradstock Abbey. The two former were burnt in the late Warres and Cadnam is propt for fear of falling.⁶

In his *Natural History of Wilts*⁶ he says:

The cellar, in which was a strong spring of water, the stateliest in Wilts. The church had long been destroyed and the foundations digged up. On the west of the hall had once been the King's lodgings which stood till 1588.

¹ *Register of Lacock*, B.M. Cott. Vit. A. viii, vide *Mon. Ang.*, vi, 501.

² *Letters and Papers, For. and Dom.*, Hen. VIII, ix, 139.

³ *Mon. Ang.*, vi, 337.

⁴ *Survey of Cathedrals*, Browne Willis (London, 1727), 777 and 784.

⁵ *Wiltshire Collections*, Aubrey and Jackson (Devizes, 1862), 186 and 189.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 187.

In 1732 the first known view of the place occurs in the collections of the brothers Buck and is of great value. It shows the western range complete to its northern gable and the porch remaining to the guest hall. The prior's lodging is also shown complete with a buttress of the church adjoining it to the south. The northern bay of the range was pulled down in the seventeenth century but the western wall was left standing. The prior's lodging was pulled down early in the nineteenth century and replaced by a two-storied building. The fireplace remained until about 1870 and was then removed to Corsham Court.

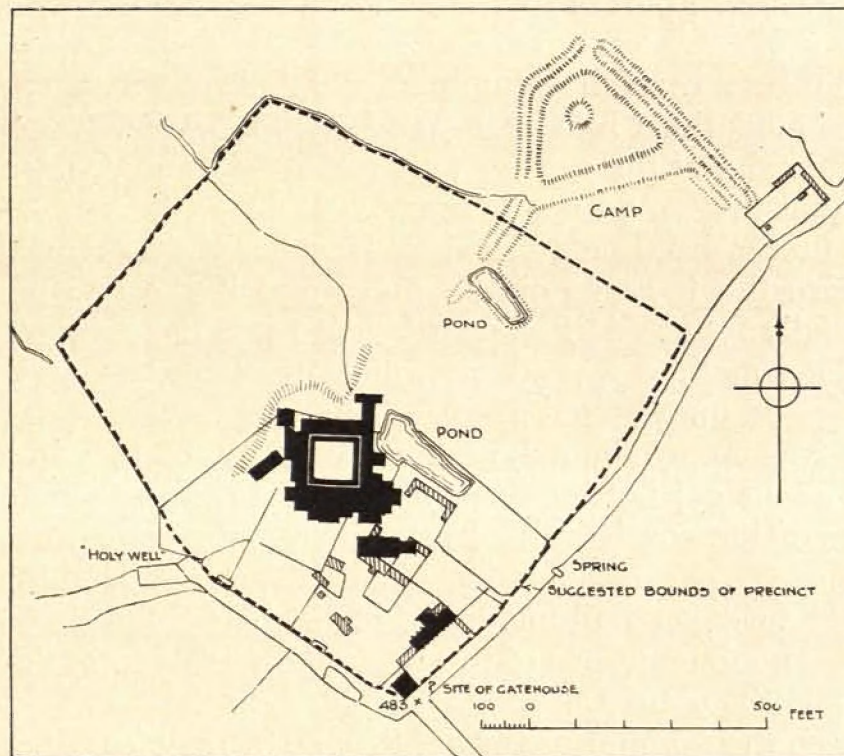


Fig. 1. Bradenstoke priory, plan of precinct.

In 1917 the property was bought by the Baron de Tuyle, who intended to erect new buildings to form a large house, and during his ownership excavations were made on the site of the nave of the church and the northern range of the cloister under the direction of the writer. It is to be hoped that at some future time the remaining parts of the site may be uncovered.

THE PRECINCT.

The bounds of the precinct are nowhere clearly traceable either by ditch or wall. The gatehouse was probably to the south-west of the great barn (fig. 1).

THE CHURCH.

The church occupied the south side of the cloister in spite of the site being virtually level from north to south. It is a curious coincidence that of the six monasteries along the Avon valley in Wiltshire four have their churches on the south side of the cloister, namely, Malmesbury, Bradenstoke, Stanley, and Lacock.

Canons' churches are notoriously varied on plan, and it is useless to suggest the nature of the eastern part of that at Bradenstoke until it has been traced by excavation.

The nave has been carefully examined, and Aubrey was perfectly correct in saying that the foundations had been grubbed up. A few fragmentary bits of foundation remained, but the greater part had been removed. This, however, does not mean that they could not be traced. It must be remembered that when a building was first erected on a clear site trenches were cut in the untouched ground to receive the footings of the walls, and if the line of the unmoved ground is carefully followed it is possible to trace the complete area of the foundations. This method was adopted and the result has been the discovery of an interesting and unexpected group of buildings.

The nave was approximately 126 ft. long by 24 ft. wide between the foundations, or about $25\frac{1}{2}$ between the neat work, and was originally aisleless. The foundations of the south wall, $6\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide, remained for almost the whole length of the nave. The reason why they were not removed like the rest was that they formed a sleeper-wall under the main arcade, and their existence was not suspected. The foundations of the west wall were 9 ft. in thickness.

In the thirteenth century an aisle was added on the south side of the nave, $8\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide between the foundations or $10\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide in the clear of the walls. The foundations of the outer wall were 7 ft. wide and had offsets on the inner face to carry the vaulting shafts. These offsets show that the width of the bays was only $12\frac{1}{2}$ ft.: on the outside face were large projections for buttresses.

The nave was divided into ten bays, but it is doubtful if the arcade was continued up to the crossing. If the quire occupied the eastern part of the nave, as was usually the case, the arcade was doubtless stopped before it reached the quire, as it did at Haughmond and Torre. The foundation of the west end of the aisle was not so wide as that of the original nave, and there was a large block of foundation 10 ft. square at the south-west angle to take a vice.

Opposite the eighth bay from the east was a large square porch of the same date as the aisle, with square buttresses at the angles.

The nave and aisle were paved with pattern tiles of fourteenth-century date

which were found at about $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. below the present ground. They were much shattered by fallen débris and frost, and no definite arrangement was traceable in those parts which were exposed. All that were found were of two variations of a four-tile pattern of quatrefoils. In 1851 other tiles were found on the site of the church; on some were the arms of the de Clares and on the others the arms of Hungerford, and some of these were removed to pave the porch at Dauntsey Rectory.¹ Stone coffins were also found, and for many years were kept as objects of curiosity.

Late in the fourteenth century the great abbey of Malmesbury built a new west tower, and at Bradenstoke, whether in emulation of its richer neighbours, or because its own central tower showed signs of weakness, a new tower was added at the west end of the nave. The foundations of the south wall remained, $6\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide, but the other sides could not be traced. The tower was about 30 ft. square over all.

On the south side of the nave, outside the fifth, sixth, and seventh bays, a chapel was added presumably in the fifteenth century. This was about 33 ft. long by 16 ft. wide and had small buttresses on its south side dividing it into only two bays, which shows that the chapel probably had a wooden roof.² The original ground in the north-east part of the chapel had been disturbed, possibly for burials, but a square sinking at the east end may mark the foundation of the altar. Eastward of the chapel was a narrow building, occupying two bays of the aisle, which may have been a vestry in connexion with the chapel.

In Buck's view the buttress at the north-west angle of the nave is shown standing to a considerable height and had upon it an attached shaft with capitals and springers of wall arcading, indicating that the original west end had considerable architectural pretensions.

THE CLOISTER.

The cloister was approximately 110 ft. square, but nothing has yet been found of the foundations of the inner walls of the surrounding alleys. The weathering remains on the western range of the lean-to roof of the western alley.

THE EASTERN RANGE.

The eastern range of buildings usually contained the chapter-house and the canons' dormitory, but nothing of it has yet been excavated, except a short length

¹ *Wiltshire Collections*, 188.

² At Lacock a Lady chapel was added in the fourteenth century on the south side of the church of only two bays but occupying three bays of the earlier work.

of the wall next the northern range. This had the beginning of a cross wall in line with the north wall of the cloister and a buttress-like projection some $17\frac{1}{2}$ ft. farther north.

In connexion with the dorter was the rere-dorter, and the position of this is indicated by the present outlet of the pond. The pond was used as a dam from which the water was drawn periodically to flush the drain.

THE FRATER.

The northern side of the cloister was covered by the frater, over a subvault in the usual manner, but had in addition another building at its east end without a subvault. Owing to the hard nature of the subsoil in this part of the site the foundations were not carried down to any depth and nothing definite was discovered of this eastern building. At the canons' house of Lilleshall in Shropshire is a similar building at the east end of the frater, and there it certainly was the warming house, which it doubtless was at Bradenstoke.

The frater subvault was traced and it was $75\frac{1}{2}$ ft. in length by 25 ft. wide. It was divided down the middle by a row of columns and was six bays in length. The vaulting was carried on the side walls by semi-octagonal half-piers $15\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide with chamfered plinths. Portions of the subvault were found standing some feet above its floor level, particularly at the west end of the north wall, the east end, and the eastern part of the south wall. The foundations of the side walls were 5 ft. wide and those of the west wall 7 ft. wide. It dated apparently from the end of the thirteenth century, and seems to have had buttresses on the north side marking the bays. In the westernmost bay was a coffin embedded in the floor for use as a water-trough. The west end of the frater overlapped the north end of the western range in the same way as it did at Croxton.

WESTERN RANGE.

The western range, with the exception of the northernmost bay, remains complete with its roof, and the west wall stands to its full length (pl. xxxi, fig. 1). It all dates from the fourteenth century and was built over a subvault. This subvault was 92 ft. long by $23\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide; it was seven bays in length with a row of octagonal columns down the middle. The four southern bays were divided from the rest by a couple of arches to carry a wall above. These had half-octagonal responds of which the easternmost remains complete. The three southern bays retain their vaulting, which has bold semi-octagonal ribs supported on the walls by heavily moulded corbels (pl. xxxi, fig. 2). The remainder of the vaulting has been destroyed with the exception of the springer and corbel on the west wall of the first bay of the northern half.

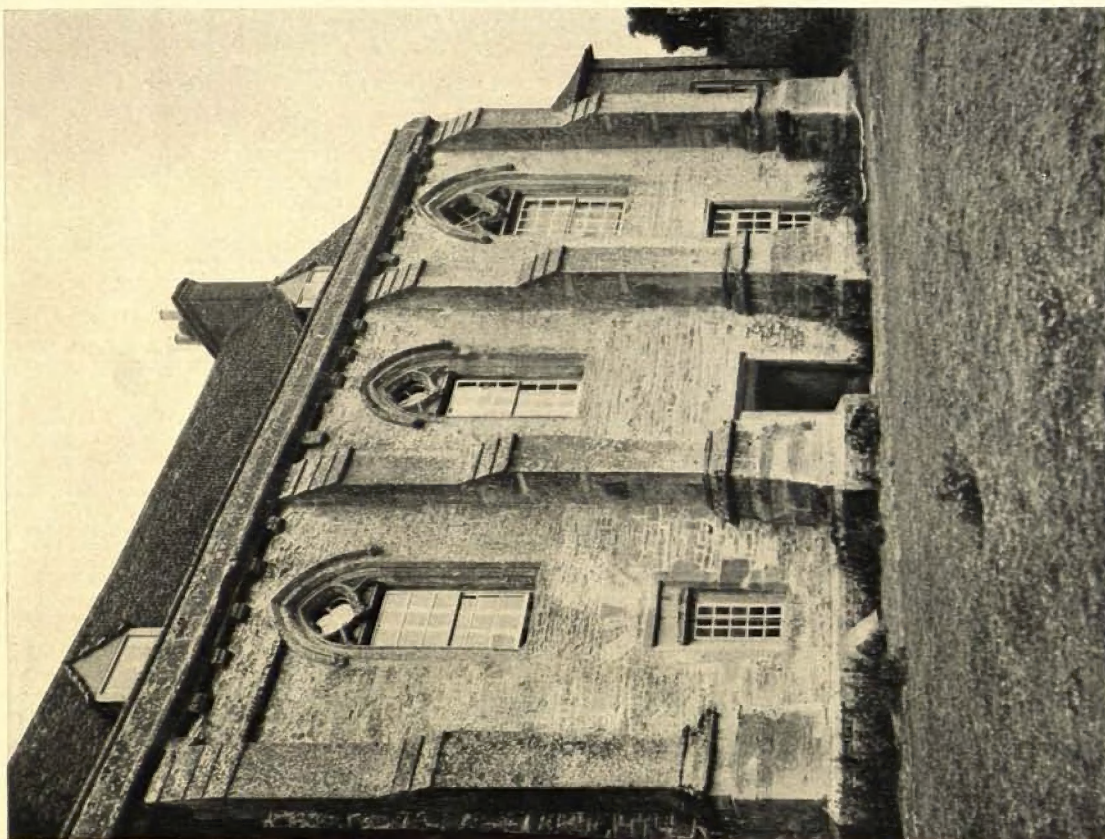


Fig. 2. Bradenstoke Priory. South end of western range

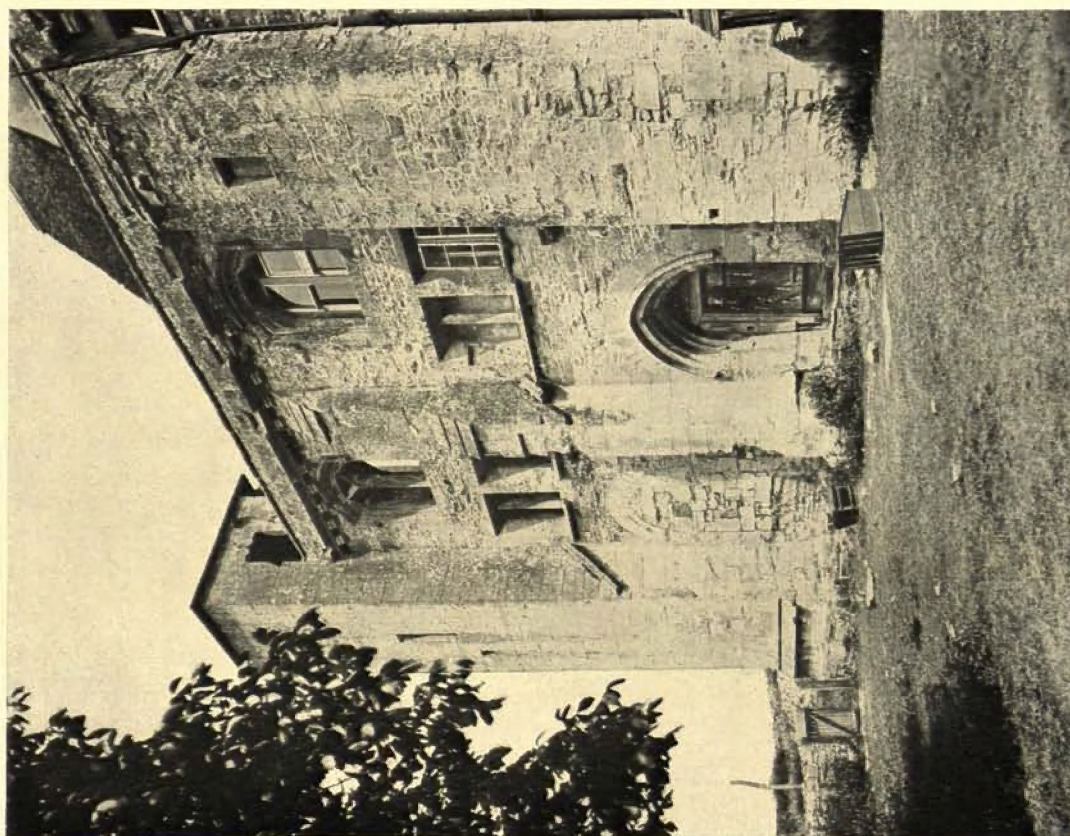


Fig. 1. Bradenstoke Priory. North end of western range

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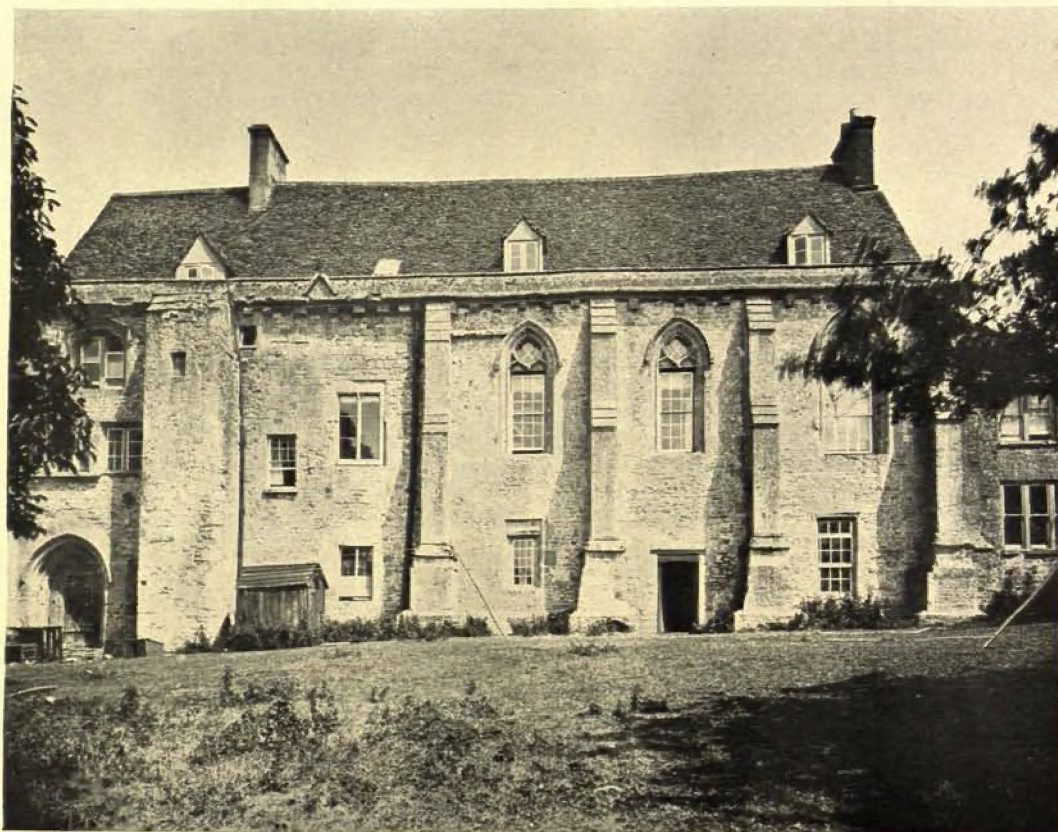


Fig. 1. Bradenstoke Priory. West side of western range



Fig. 2. Bradenstoke Priory. Subvault of guest hall

In the west wall of the first and third bays from the south are remains of the original windows, which were square-headed with pointed relieving arches above (pl. xxx, fig. 2). In the fourth bay are remains of an original doorway (pl. xxxi, fig. 1). In the sixth bay is a large pointed doorway of two hollow chamfered members with a hood-mould, and in the last bay is a similar doorway, at a slightly higher level, which is now blocked up with masonry (pl. xxx, fig. 1).

Over the four southern bays of the subvault was the Prior's hall for the entertainment of superior guests. It was 51 ft. long by 24 ft. wide, and was lighted from the west by three large two-light windows having pointed heads and transoms. The southernmost window is larger than the rest to give extra light to the dais. In the fourth bay are the remains of the entrance doorway which had detached columns in the jambs, but the arch is destroyed and the whole is built up with masonry.

There is no indication of a contemporary fireplace, so that in monastic times the fire would have been on a centre hearth with a louvre in the roof.

The hall was covered by a fine open timber roof divided into four bays with arched principals, having mouldings on the edges enriched with ball flowers. In the fifteenth century the hall seems to have been ceiled with a flat wooden ceiling of which part remains at the south end; but it is possible that this ceiling never extended beyond the bay over the dais.

Externally the bays are marked by buttresses having two sets-off and bold plinths, which show that the original ground level was higher than it is at present. The building is capped by a low parapet supported on a corbel course. Projecting from the west wall, in line with the north end of the hall, is a square turret which contained garderobes at the first and second floor levels.

The hall was approached by a flight of steps up to a projecting porch opposite the fourth bay. The weathering of the apex of its roof remains in the parapet but all else has been removed. The porch is clearly shown in Buck's view and consisted of a stone basement in which there was a two-light window in the west wall and a smaller two-light window in the north wall. Over this was a timber structure, forming the porch itself, with a gable placed east and west. The stairs remained on the south side.

The portion of the western range northward of the hall had two stories above the subvault (pl. xxx, fig. 1). The storey level with the hall was very low, being only $7\frac{1}{4}$ ft. from floor to ceiling. It was lighted on the west side by a pair of two-light square-headed windows in each bay and was probably divided up into cubicles for superior guests. The storey above has a large two-light traceried window with a segmental head in each bay, and Buck shows a large two-light pointed window in the north gable. The room was apparently

a common sleeping room for guests. One bay remains of the original roof, which is of similar character but slightly different in detail from that of the hall.

At the north-west angle of the range is a large square turret containing a vice which starts at the first floor and connects it with the second floor, after which it continues up to the gutter of the roof (pl. xxx, fig. 1).

Outside the two northern bays was a pentice, over the two doorways from the subvault, of which the weathering remains under the first floor windows, and the sloping weathering from this survives on the middle buttress and the angle vice.

THE KITCHEN.

The kitchen was doubtless arranged to the northward of this pentice so as to be conveniently placed for serving the frater and the guest hall.

THE PRIOR'S LODGING.

Between the south end of the guest hall and the church was a building, 20 ft. from east to west, by 12 ft. wide. It is clearly shown in Buck's view and consisted of three stories. The bottom storey had a pointed doorway in the middle of the west wall and was the outer parlour and cloister entry. In the north wall is a moulded and pointed doorway that has a flight of steps to the subvault. The storey above was known as the Prior's room until its destruction, and there is no question that this was its use. In the west wall was a large eight-light window with two transoms and tracery in the head under a flat lintel. In the string-course under this window was a series of arms and badges¹ which have been preserved by being built into the present building occupying the site.

These consist of:

- (1) A shield bearing a cross charged with five roses, for Thomas Langford, bishop of Salisbury from 1484 to 1493.
- (2) A large letter *Œ*.
- (3) A rebus with the letter *Œ* under a wall from which issues a tree.
- (4) A rebus as the last but without the letter. These three devices are commemorative of the prior who built the window, Thomas Walshe. The rebus being a wall and ash-tree.
- (5) A shield bearing the leopards of England.

¹ These are shown in Buck's view beginning at the north end: (1) Rebus. (2) Cross and roses. (3) France and England. (4) Checky. (5) Three feathers. (6) Rebus. (7) Leopards of England. (8) Blank. (9) Three pales vair in chief a leopard of England.

- (6) A shield bearing France (modern) and England quarterly.
- (7) A shield with three feathers per pale.
- (8) A shield bearing three pales vair on a chief a leopard of England, said to have been used by Patrick, the son of the Founder.



THE PRIOR'S ROOM, BRADENSTOKE PRIORY, WILTS.

Fig. 2. Bradenstoke priory, the prior's room.

Reproduced, by permission, from the Builder.

Inside the room was a large fireplace which is shown in position in a sketch published in *The Builder* for 1849¹ (fig. 2). It was afterwards taken down and removed to Corsham Court, where it was used for the fireplace in the billiard-room; but it has recently been returned to Bradenstoke. The fireplace was 6 ft. wide with a very flat arched head, the stone of which is richly decorated

¹ Vol. vii, p. 387, August 18, 1849.

with two rows of traceried panelling. The top row consists of five foliated quatrefoils with shields in the middle of each, but none is carved with charges. The bottom row has six lozenge-shaped panels with foliated quatrefoils and large carved bosses in the middle of each, on which are the letters *T. W. A. L. S. be.* These letters have been noticed by more than one writer, but it does not seem to have occurred to them to read the letters into the simple *T.* Walshe, the name of the prior who built the room. Buck shows that there was a high octagonal chimney over this fireplace. On the east side of where the fireplace stood was a moulded and pointed doorway.

Buck shows that there was another storey over the Prior's room which had a gabled roof placed east and west, and there was a large transomed window in the west end. The gable was set back from the wall face below and seems to have been of timber construction. Even with this added storey the Prior's lodging was very small for a rich foundation, but there may have been other chambers and a chapel over the south alley of the cloister like the abbess's lodging at Lacock.

The reference by Aubrey to the king's lodging to the west of the hall is interesting as showing that the remaining buildings were not all that formerly existed for the entertainment of guests. Nothing is known of the date of this lodging, but in connexion with it may be mentioned that King John visited the priory nine times and King Henry III in 1223.

A necessary building in connexion with all monastic houses was the infirmary, the position of which at Bradenstoke is very uncertain. It was generally to the east of the cloister, but that position is occupied by a large pond which seems to have existed in monastic days. At Haughmond it was parallel with the frater, but this could not have been its position here as there is a sharp drop in the ground just northward of the northern range. At the White canons' house of St. Agatha in Yorkshire it adjoined the church on the opposite side to the cloister, and this was probably its position at Bradenstoke.

THE BARN.

The priory barn still remains 400 ft. to the south-west of the south end of the western range and is placed with its centre line north-east and south-west (pl. xxxii). It dates from the middle of the fourteenth century and measures 104 ft. in length by 25 ft. in width. It is divided into nine bays, of which the middle one is wider than the rest to take a large porch 20 ft. by 13 ft. which projects from the north-west side.

The roof is of the same date as the walls and is made with heavy principals having collars at half height supported by arched braces. There are three



Fig. 1. Bradenstoke Priory. South-east side of barn



Fig. 2. Bradenstoke Priory. Barn from the north



Fig. 1. Kington Priory. South-west angle of cloister



Fig. 2. Kington Priory. West side of western range

purlins on each side all supported by arched wind-braces. The side walls are 15 ft. high and have bold buttresses behind each couple, but there are no buttresses at the angles, a logical design as there is no thrust from the end gables. There is a wide segmental doorway in the north-west wall in the south-west bay. In the south-east wall there are modern openings in the second bay from the east, in the middle bay and in the ninth bay. There are narrow square-headed loops in each remaining bay.

The porch has a wide segmental arched doorway of the full width of the porch with deep buttresses to take the abutment on each side. In the south-west wall is the usual small doorway of access to the barn after the big doors are bolted. At the north-east end are two buttresses, one in the middle of the gable seems to be original, but the other near the north-west angle is apparently an addition. There is also an added buttress on the south-east side in line with the north-east gable.

MONKTON FARLEY PRIORY

Like Bradenstoke, Monkton Farley is placed on high land just within the borders of Wiltshire, three and a half miles due east of Bath. There is an excellent water-supply from land springs, but there is no natural water-course for drainage.

Fifty years after the conquest the manor of Farley was in the hands of the great family of Bohun, but how they became possessed of it is not clear. Humphry, the son of the Humphry Bohun who accompanied the Conqueror, married Maud, the daughter of Edward of Salisbury and sister of Walter who founded Bradenstoke. This Humphry and his wife gave to the priory of Lewes land at Bishopstrow, called the Buries, and in the event of their founding a Cluniac house at Farley they would convey to the priory of Lewes the manor and tithes of that place on condition that the house of Lewes should supply a colony of monks for the priory of Farley who would enjoy the said endowments for their own use.¹ A small priory was erected, and the church at any rate was built in stone.

The original endowments were very considerably increased by Humphry Bohun, son of the founders, the Empress Maud, and one Ilbert de Chaz, a follower of the Bohuns. These endowments were confirmed to the monks by this third Humphry Bohun and by King Henry III in the eleventh year of his reign.² In consequence of this accession of wealth new buildings were erected, including a larger church.

¹ *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv. 269.

² *Mon. Ang.* (London, 1849), v, 26 and 27.

236 EXCAVATIONS AT SOME WILTSHIRE MONASTERIES

In 1280 a dispute arose between the Bohuns and the prior of Lewes over the nomination of a new prior, which resulted in a lawsuit that ended in the usual medieval manner of settlement by compromise.¹

In 1298 the Crown seized two of the priory manors² which the prior farmed on behalf of the alien nunnery of Martigniac. But it ultimately gave back the manors, and seems in consequence to have claimed the status of hereditary founder.

During the fourteenth century considerable alterations were made to the church and a new presbytery was erected with new quire stalls.

In 1409 the priory and its estates were in the hands of Sir Walter Hungerford and Lord Stourton, doubtless on behalf of the Crown in consequence of forfeiture for not maintaining the full complement of brethren. Sir Walter Hungerford petitioned the Commons in that year

that whereas certain commissioners sent into Wiltshire had reported that he and Lord Stourton had suffered the priory of Farley to fall into dilapidation whilst it was in their care, he prays that the matter be tried by a jury of his peers.³

Whether the accusation was proved or not there certainly was great truth in it, for in April 1438 the tower of the church fell down.

On the third of February of the following year a release was granted for seven years

to John Brugge, the prior and the convent of the house of Farlegh of the yearly farm of 55 marks payable to the king for lands belonging to the alien nunnery of Mortigniake on condition that the amount be expended, under the survey of the bishop of Bath and the lord of Hungerford, in the repair of the convent church; which church and its tower fell down in April last crushing the quire and destroying their books, bells, and other ornaments. The petitioners shewed that they will never be able to repair their losses and resume divine service as it should be held without the king's generous help.⁴

The fall of the tower so damaged the presbytery and transepts that no attempt was made to re-edify them; but a new sanctuary was built on the site of the crossing and the quire was made in the nave.

At the end of the Lewes cartulary is a long deed in which Farley is described as of the foundation of King Edward III for thirteen monks to sing daily service for the king's welfare, and that they once incurred forfeiture for having maintained only ten brethren, instead of thirteen, for nine years.⁵

In 1535 the visitation of monasteries was begun with the idea of their

¹ *Mon. Ang.*, v, 27.

² *Ibid.* v, 28.

³ *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 275.

⁴ *Rot. Pat.*, 17 Hen. VI, p. i, m. 20.

⁵ *Vide Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 275.

suppression, and in August of that year Farley was visited by Cromwell's creatures Layton and Legh. On the 7th of that month the former wrote to his master: 'Farley sell to Lewys the trewth is a vara stewys'; and a few days after he wrote: 'I sende yowe also Mare Magdalens girdell and that is wrappyde and coveride with white, sent also with gret reverence to women traveling, whiche girdell Matilda thempresse fownder of Ferley gave unto them as saith the holy father of Ferley.'¹

The act to suppress all monasteries of under £200 a year revenue was passed in the same year; but it did not come into operation immediately, as in many cases it was doubtful what houses came within the category. In order to ascertain this, commissioners were appointed for each county, and their report on Farley, dated 1st August 1536, is as follows:

- A. A hedde howse of Clunasents of Seint Benetts Rule (former valuation) £153 14s. 2½d. (present valuation) £195 2s. 8½d. with £18 4s. 6d. for the demaynes of the same.
- B. (Religious) six all being preests of honest conversacion, holley desyryng continuance in religion.
- C. (Servants) eighteen—viz. wayting servants five; officers of the household eight and hinds five.
- D. Church and mansion with outehouses in convenient state. The lead and bells viewed and esteemed to be sold to £28 8s.
- E. (Goods) £89 18s. 7d. viz. juells and plate £30 3s. 3d.; ornaments £8 15s. 4d.; stuffe of household £10 13s.; stokkes and stores £39 7s.
- F. Owing by the house £245 2s. 7d. Owing to the house £51 10s.
- G. Great woods 100 acres and copis woods 66 acres; all to be solde esteemed to £62 16s.²

The last prior Lewis Breknok had a pension of £24.³

Farley was granted on 6 June 1536 to Sir Edward Seymour, though not formally dissolved at the time. It was in 1550 exchanged with the see of Salisbury,⁴ under whom it was held by various owners.

In 1744—

Three Labourers being employed to level a very uneven Piece of Ground used for a Coney-Warren belonging to Webb Seymour, Esq. at Monkton-Farley, found the Pillar of a Church, and about four Foot under the Rubbish, discover'd a Chancel, of a very curious Roman Pavement in Chequer-Work, adorn'd with various Figures; the Bricks about four Inches square, and an Inch thick: This place consists of about 24 Foot each Way, its Situation being East and West. In the Front are four flat

¹ *Letters and Papers*, Hen. VIII, ix, 42 and 168.

² P. R. O. Chantry Certificates, 100. m. 2.

⁴ *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 276 and 277.

³ P. R. O. Augmentation Book, 232, 21 f.

Stones, under which Persons are interr'd : The second stone from the Southward has a French Inscription on it and Prior Lawrence, who is represented in his Prior's Habit, in the Posture of Praying : He was buried A.D. 616 (*sic*). The substance of his Inscription is, He desires you to pray for his sins, etc. The other three Stones are without Inscriptions. In the North Angle of the Chancel is a Tomb, like a Seat, with the following Inscription on its Surface in Characters thus render'd.

(The inscription given is that on the monument of Ilbert de Chaz, which will be referred to later.)

It has also the same Inscription on the Side in Roman and Saxon Characters, after the present Way of Writing. About two Thirds of the Chancel, to the Eastward, is a Step ascending to the Altar, in which is a Sepulchre open'd, and the Skeleton of a stout Man, who was upwards of six Foot high. On the flat Stone of this Sepulchre is carved in Basso Relievo his Bust, and under that a Lyon, as an Hieroglyphical Emblem of his Character. This Person, by his near Interrment to the Altar, I suppose might be the Founder of this Abby or Monastery. To the South Side of the Altar is a Floor, about four Foot under the Rubbish of the same Pavement with the former, and about ten Foot square, but no Body interr'd there. On the North Side of the Altar, which I imagine was in the Church-yard, is another Sepulchre open'd, with the lower Part of a Skeleton, but the upper Part wanting. Farther to the Northward is a Yew-Tree, which is a plain Demonstration that this was a Church yard belonging to the Abby. To the West and Northward are several very large Stone Pillars with various Figures cut on them, which appear as fresh as if immediately hewn out of a Quarry. As to the Dimensions of this Church, 'tis impossible to give an exact Account how far it extended—For there were, about 20 years ago, to the Southward, at a considerable Distance, dug up three more Sepulchres, but without any Inscriptions upon them. Also an Heap of Bones, from which it is evident there was a Charnel-House belonging to this Church : 'Tis very probable, as the Rubbish is clear'd away, many more Curiosities will be discovered in the Body of the Church. The Labourers have found a Silver Cup, Spoon and Thimble.¹

Dr. William Evetts was at this time staying at Chippenham and he wrote to Dr. Ducarel, secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, of these discoveries and sent him some sketches of the various monuments,² but this communication does not seem to have been laid before the Society and his sketches are lost.

The late Canon Jackson records that

in 1841 during some further alterations of the ground by the late Mr. Wade Browne a large slab, once the covering of a stone coffin, was found. On it is the effigy of a cross-legged knight in chain armour, sculptured in low relief. On the shield, which lies not at his side but over the whole body occupying the full width of the stone, are the arms of Dunstanville (fretty on a canton a lion passant, surmounted by a label).³

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, xiv, 139.

² *Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (J. G. Nichols), iii, 585.

³ *Wills. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 283.

Further excavations were made on the site of the church by the late Sir Charles Hobhouse, and are briefly recorded by him with a plan in the *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine* for 1882.¹ In 1911 Sir Charles caused further excavations to be made and the earlier discoveries were again exposed. These excavations were supervised by the writer, and though it was not possible to

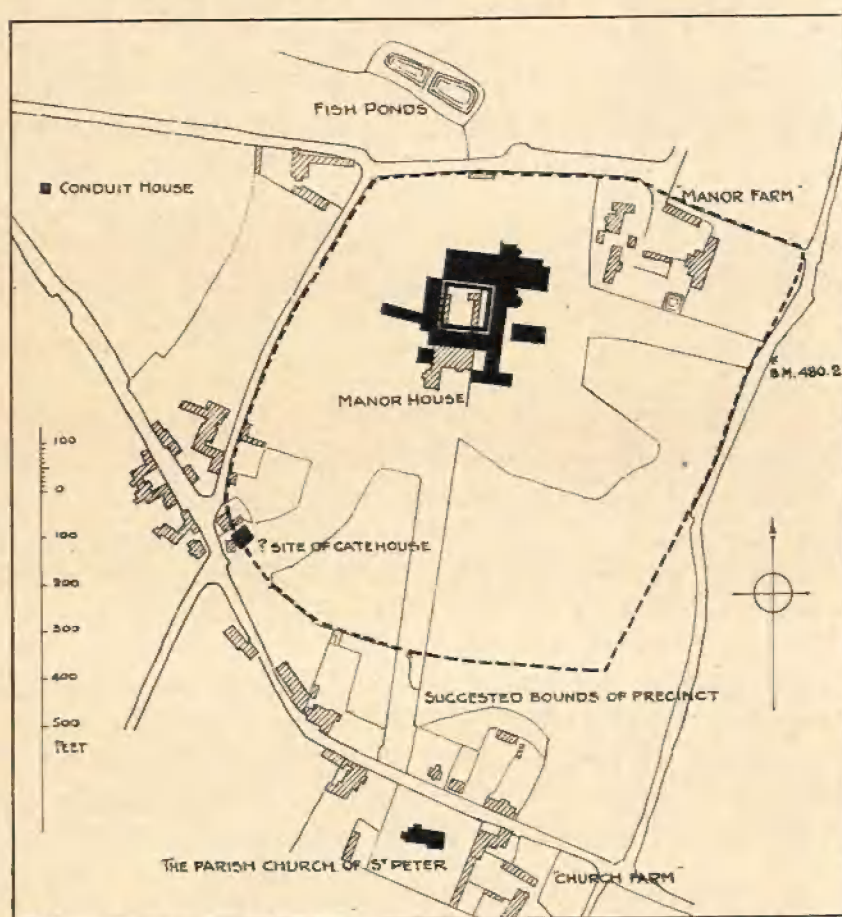


Fig. 3. Monkton Farley priory, plan of precinct.

continue them as far as might be wished, they have thrown considerable light on the plan and story of this church.

THE PRECINCT.

The bounds of the precinct are nowhere clearly defined, but the present roads on the north and west seem to indicate its extent on those sides, and there are indications of the other sides which give it an area of about 20 acres. The church and cloister were placed to the north-west of this area (fig. 3).

¹ *Wills. Arch. Mag.*, xx, 74.

The site is peculiar, the highest point being in the north-west angle and it falls rapidly to the south-east and again from the west end of the church to the north-east. The church was oriented slightly to the south of east, and at the present time the ground drops suddenly on its south side, but this is not an original feature as is shown by the only fragment of building that remains above ground. The reason of the present level is, that the makers of the house after the Suppression used up the claustral buildings and dropped the ground around the house to the level of the frater subvault. This dropping of the ground was continued at the building of the present house in 1762, and has apparently destroyed the foundations of the chief buildings south of the church.

The gatehouse was probably opposite the cross roads near where the present south lodge stands. The conduit for the water-supply is on the high ground 300 yards to the west of the church.

THE CHURCH.

The only part of the first church that has been found is the apse of the north transept chapel. The rest of the site of this church has been removed by the lowering of the ground already referred to.

This apse was 13 ft. wide by $9\frac{1}{2}$ ft. deep with an outer wall 3 ft. in thickness. The wall had a chamfered plinth externally and a pilaster buttress remained on the north-east side. The entrance from the transept was by an arch of two members of the full width of the apse. The inner member rested on a bold half-round column with moulded base that had toes at the angles.

The north-east angle of the transept itself remained and had pilaster buttresses on each face and its main walls were 4 ft. thick.

The church to which this fragment belonged was of course smaller than its successor and apparently consisted of a presbytery with eastern apse, transepts with apsidal chapels, and an aisleless nave.

As usual when the building of a new church was decided upon it was constructed alongside the original one on the side farthest from the cloister, in order that the existing structure might not be interfered with until the new building was ready for occupation.¹ The new church at Farley was erected clear of the old except for the apsidal chapel of the north transept, which was retained as the chapel of the southern transept of the new church.

Only the middle portion of the later church has been excavated, so that the

¹ Cf. Waverley (*Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 1905), Haughmond (*Archaeological Journal*, lxvi, 281), and Tintern (*Official Guide*).

complete plan cannot be definitely described though the parts uncovered reveal a very interesting story.

The second church when first built consisted of a short presbytery with eastern apse and ambulatory aisle, transepts with eastern chapels, and a nave with aisles. There was a tower over the crossing. Of this church the western piers of the crossing, the junction of the transepts and aisles, and the south side of the presbytery remained from 12 in. to 3 ft. above the floor. The floor area was covered with pattern tiles divided by stone bands.

The presbytery was $25\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide and the south aisle was $9\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide with an outer wall 4 ft. in thickness. At 14 ft. from the transept was a pilaster buttress 3 ft. wide. The paving of the aisle remained complete and had at 17 ft. from the transept a cross band of stone of which the west side was square with the aisle, but the east side tapered from $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. at the north end to 13 in. at the south. This tapering band indicated that the pavement to the east radiated from a centre, and the only reason for it doing so was the existence of an apse with an ambulatory aisle. If the tapering sides of the band are continued to the middle of the presbytery it gives the centre from which the apse was struck.

The crossing was approximately 25 ft. square and the western piers remained complete. These show that the north and south arches were of two members of which the inner was carried by a pair of half-round columns. There were no responds for the western arch, which was doubtless carried on corbels as at Malmesbury.

The south transept was apparently 35 ft. long by 25 ft. wide, but no remains of the south wall were found. The west wall had, next the crossing, an arch into the nave aisle of three members carried on responds having triple moulded columns on square bases of the same plan as the main piers at Wells Cathedral. In the angle formed by the transept and south aisle was a vice, $6\frac{1}{2}$ ft. in diameter, which opened from the transept by a doorway of a single square member. The apse of the original north transept was retained as the eastern chapel of this transept, which is shown by the paving of the thirteenth century being found within it. There were two steps across the original arch from the transept, which had tiles on the risers as well as on the treads. In front of the chapel were two grave slabs ornamented with foliated crosses. The tile paving of the rest of the transept was almost complete and had stone bands 5 ft. apart in line with the nave aisle and others the same distance apart in the opposite direction down the middle of the transept.

The north transept was doubtless similar to the south but was not exposed, except the arch into the nave aisle, which was precisely like its companion on the south and had similar bands in the tile flooring to the east of it.

The main span of the nave was the same as that of the presbytery, but the aisles were 11 ft. 8 in. in width. The responds of both arcades remained next the crossing and were each of three members like the arches into the transepts.

In the fourteenth century the presbytery was lengthened eastward with a square east end, and the old apse and ambulatory were removed. The eastern end of this building was that uncovered in 1744 and the remains then found appear to have been grubbed up, which is particularly unfortunate as the exact position of them with respect to the rest of the building cannot be determined. The monument of Ilbert de Chaz, which had been removed from the earlier church, was placed on the north side of the altar apparently in a recess, as is indicated by it having the first part of the later inscription cut on a detached stone which was evidently placed at the head of the monument to fit an opening. The stone of the 'stout man' was in front of the altar and the four other slabs were in a row on the step below. The floor described as about 10 ft. square to the south of the altar must have belonged to a chapel added at the east end of the south aisle. Dr. Evetts describes this more fully as 'another place lower in the ground than the former which seems to me to have been a private chapel for confession and in the wall is a place for holy water. The pavement the same as the other. The walls are perfect above a yard high almost quite round it up to the bottom of a window in one part.'

Of the altered presbytery the 1911 excavations revealed a considerable piece of the south wall next the crossing, in which at 17 ft. from the transept was an opening 4 ft. wide with chamfered angles but no door. A portion of the north wall remained, but there was no corresponding opening to that on the south. Eastward of the opening in the south wall was a step across the presbytery. There was another step 9 ft. to the west of this and the platform between was paved with tiles. It had at the north end a grave slab bearing an incised cross.

Below the western step was the monks' quire belonging to the new presbytery. On either side, 14 ft. apart, was a stone base-course having a row of little projecting buttresses to take the wooden fronts of the stalls. At 8 ft. on either side below the step was a half-round step which led to a gangway between the fronts of the stalls. The stalls were probably continued down to the west side of the crossing, where they were returned against the pulpitum which divided the quire from the nave.

The fall of the tower in 1438 was due to the failure of one or both of the eastern piers of the crossing, and its collapse caused so much damage to the

¹ *Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, iii, 585.

presbytery and transepts that no attempt was made to reinstate the ruin. A new sanctuary was built on the site of the crossing and a new quire was made in the uninjured nave. The new work had walls only 3 ft. in thickness and had double buttresses at the angles. The north wall was found with a plain chamfered plinth and the rest of the work had been destroyed to the foundations. In the first arch of the nave on the south side a recess was added at this time perhaps for sedilia. The eastern jamb remains, and this has a wide panelled chamfer with beaded angles and moulded bases.

The nave has not yet been excavated, so it is not possible to speak definitely of the arrangements which must have been added after the fall of the tower. The first bay was probably left clear and the new quire erected in the second and third bays with a pulpitum at the third pair of pillars. Owing to the destruction of the eastern chapels the nave aisles were probably parted off to form chapels to take their place.

THE WESTERN RANGE.

The only building of which any remains exist is a late twelfth-century hall on the west side of the western range placed east and west and slightly out of square with the range. The fragment is only 20 ft. long but stands to a considerable height; it retains the north-west angle of the building, which had a pilaster buttress, and two lancet windows of its north side. These have moulded jambs and arches, and rest on a bold string-course externally; internally they have deep splays and the sills have notches to receive the wooden frames of the glass.

Near this fragment is a shed containing a number of architectural fragments and floor tiles. With them are the remains of the tombs which had been discovered on the site:

(1) The monument of Ilbert de Chaz, which is a grave slab 5 ft. 10 in. in length by 2 ft. wide at the head and 18 in. at the foot. Down the middle is an inscription formed of large letters containing smaller ones which reads:

Hic jacet Ilbert^{us} de Chaz bonitate refer^{re} q^{ui} ē Brotona dedit hic p^{ro}plurima dona.¹

When the monument was refixed in the new fourteenth-century presbytery a new expanded inscription of the same reading was cut on the edge, and this began on a stone which had been added at the head to make out the original slab to the full length of the recess it occupied.

¹ This is illustrated in Canon Jackson's paper already referred to (*Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 283), and Bowles and Nichols, *Lacock Abbey* (Lond. 1835), 352.

244 EXCAVATIONS AT SOME WILTSHIRE MONASTERIES

(2) The Dunstanville slab as already described by the late Canon Jackson. The label has five points.

(3) The trunk and head of an effigy in chain mail from an altar-tomb, but the shield has gone so that it cannot be identified.

Unfortunately there is no record where these last two objects were found.

THE CONDUIT HOUSE.

The conduit house is a stone building 9 ft. square externally and has a deep splayed plinth. It is entered by a segmental-headed doorway, and has over the doorway and in the opposite wall a square-headed loop. It is covered by a steep roof made of stone slabs with rebated edges to keep out the weather. On the east face of the top quoin of the north-east angle is cut SQ' x TURNER 1784, and on the top stone of the south jamb of the doorway E BATCHELOR 1784.

The conduit is apparently of fourteenth-century date, but the upper part and the roof were rebuilt in 1784.

There is a similar conduit of fourteenth-century character though actually built 1540-53 on the top of Bowden hill, some nine miles away, in connexion with Lacock Abbey.

KINGTON PRIORY

The remains of this little priory of Benedictine nuns are in a secluded depression three miles north-west of Chippenham. The actual founder is not known with certainty and in Aubrey's time the Empress Maud was credited with the good deed. Among the charters printed in the *Monasticon* are three which throw some light on the matter.

(1) Robert of Brinton and Eva his wife, during the episcopate of Jocelyn of Sarum (1142-84), gave the church of Iwerna (Ewerne Stapleton in Dorset) to the nuns of Kington.¹

(2) About the same time A(dam) of Brinton gave 'to God and our Lady and the nuns of Kyngton all the land in that place which the said nuns hold of me'.²

(3) Also about the same date Hugh de Mortimer confirms the last gift as follows:

know that I have granted to God, our Lady and the nuns of Kington serving God there . . . all the land which A(dam) of Brinton holds of my fee in the same

¹ *Mon. Ang.*, iv, 400, no. x.

² *Ibid.* iv, 398, no. ii.

vill . . . which R. the son of Weyfer of Brinton gave to them when he founded the place.¹

One of the witnesses is R. de Brinton and is presumably the same as Robert of the first deed. In the book of obits drawn out anew in 1493 there is no mention of Robert, but 'Adam sonne of Waifere of Kynton, Roger Mortimer and Sir Hugh Mortimer that gave us all our lands in Kyngton' are to be prayed for on 7th January.²

The priory was built in stone probably by the founder and was never a large house.

In 1221 there existed a corrody under the patronage of the crown for two poor girls.³

The church was apparently reconstructed early in the fifteenth century, for on the 15th March 1435 'the altar of the church of Kynton was dedicated in honour of the Holy Mother of our Saviour by Ralph, bishop of Sarum'.⁴ Considerable other works were done including the rebuilding of the whole of the western range with the prioress's lodging.

In 1493 the obituary was 'drawn out anew by K. Moleyns, prioress, during Lent', and at the foot of the page of March obits is the following interesting entry:

In the days of Dame Kateryne Moleyns Prioress here, John Baker gave to this House at Minchyn Kyngton,

A Bone of St. Christopher closed in cloth of gold, a noble Relyke.

Thys boke, for to be their Mortiloge.

A boke of Seynts Lyves yn Englishe.

A Spruse table and a Cubbord that be in their parlor.

The mendyng and renewyng of an old Mas Boke of theirs.

A Fetherbed, a bolster, a Pylow and 2 fair Coverlettes.

The half of the money that was paid for the Ymage of Seynt Savyor standing upon the Auter for their quire. And for the Yimages of St. Mighel and St. Kateryne in St. James's Chapell.

Also the Aulter Cloth of the Salutacyon of oure Lady, being in St. James's Chapell and 3 yards of Canvass annexed thereto to lye upon the Auter.

A Tester and a Seller that hangeth over my Lady's Bed. A Grail. A fair Matyns Boke, with Dirige and many good Prayers. A dozen of round pewter dishes with heires.⁵

This entry is most valuable in being the only evidence of St. James's chapel,

¹ *Mon. Ang.*, iv, 399, no. iii.

² *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 61.

³ *Rot. Claus.*, 1221 et seq.

⁴ Book of Obits printed by Canon Jackson, *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 60-7.

⁵ *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 62, foot-note.

which would seem to have been something more than one of the altars in the church. If the three yards of canvas can be taken as the length of the altar it must have belonged to a chapel of considerable size.

In the days of this prioress there were nine nuns in the house, which decreased to three at the Suppression.

In 1535 the emissaries of Cromwell made themselves particularly offensive on the occasion of their visit to Kington. John ap Rice wrote to Cromwell—

At Keynton where there is but thre ladies in the house we have founde ij convict of incontinencie. Thone whereof bicause she was under age of xxiiij and not very desirous to continue in religion, Mr. Doctor hath discharged. And one Dame Marie Denys, a faire yong woman of Laycok is chosen Prioress at Kyngton aforesaid.¹

The commissioners of the county in the following year reported of this priory:

Priory of Kyngton.

- A. A hedde house of Minchins of Seint Benedicts rule. (former valuation) £25 9s. 1½d.; (present valuation) £35 15s. with 100s. for the demaynes of the same.
- B. (Religious) four, by reporte of honest conversacion, all desyring continuance in religion.
- C. (Servants) eleven—viz. chapleyn one; clerk one; women servants four; wayting servants one; hinds four.
- D. Church and mansion in good state. The oute houses in summe ruyne for lacke of coveringe. The lead and bells there esteemed to be solde to 105s.
- E. (Goods) £17 1s.—viz. ornaments 8s. 6d.; stuffe 2s. 10d.; and stoores of corne and cattall £12 19s. 8d.
- F. Owyng by the house £50 and owyng to the house nil.
- G. Great woods none, copyswoods 36 acres: esteemed to be solde £24.²

The prioress Mary Dennys, the 'faire yong woman of Laycok', had a pension of 100s. 'She dyed in Bristowe 1593, a good old maide, verie vertuose and godlye and is buried in the church of the Gauntes on the Grene.'³

At the Suppression the site was granted to Sir Richard Long of Wraxall and Draycot⁴ and has since passed through many hands.

John Aubrey lived within a mile of the priory and has left a number of notes upon it in his collections from which the following may be taken as referring to the buildings.

¹ *Letters and Papers, For. and Dom., Hen. VIII, ix, 160.*

² P. R. O. Chantry Certificate, 100, m. 2.

³ Lib. Corp. Christi Coll. Oxon., no. ccxx, f. 36, b; *vide Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv. 55.

⁴ *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, iv, 71.

This is a very pleasant seate and was a fine Nunnery . . .

On the east side of the howse is a ground . . . called the Nymph-hay. Here old Jaques, who lived on the other side, would say, he hath seen 40 or 50 sisters, nunnes, in a morning spinning with their rocks, and wheelles, and bobbins . . .

Their last Priest was parson Whaddon whose chamber is that on the right hand of the porch with the old fashion chimney.

The Lady Cicelie Bodenham was lady Prioress here. In the parlour windowe was, and in the Buttery yet, the coat of Bodenham with a mitre to which were two chains, or. Also the coat of Bodenham . . . quartering G three bars checky A and S. Also in the parlour window this coat, G two bars nebule O. above the coat a mitre . . . In divers panelis of glass about the howse are the letters B.D.

In the Chapell, which was very fayre, is neither glasse, chancell nor monument remayning. Formerly and lately in the garden where chancell and consecrated ground was, have been digged up severall coffins of freestone and one stone was found of about two foote diameter . . . having in the centre on one side a heart held between two hands: it was found at the foote of a grave in which there was found a Chalice.

The windowes of the Chapel of Priory St. Maries like those in the Tower of Merton Coll. Oxon.¹

The house was considerably altered shortly after Aubrey's time by the insertion of larger windows and a large gable added on the west side. All that now remains above ground is the western range, and the frater on the south side of the cloister.

Small nunneries existed all over the country, but only a very few have been traced by excavation. These houses were mostly very poor, and the buildings, though arranged on a systematic plan around the cloister, were a great contrast to those of their rich neighbours. In many cases the buildings were of wood, and the roofs sometimes had no more permanent covering than thatch.

Some years ago our Fellow Mr. William Brown published a valuable paper upon some Suppression documents containing detailed descriptions of eleven small nunneries in Yorkshire, of which five were Benedictine houses, and a few words upon these houses may throw some light upon the remains at Kington.²

The churches in all cases were parallelograms varying from 80 ft. by 20 ft. to 50 ft. by 18 ft.; there was a high altar and two other altars in the quire. The quire stalls were of wood and in one case there were '22 fayre stalles carved and boarded with waynscott'. The portion of the church below the quire was merely an antechapel containing one altar. In each case the roof was covered with lead. The cloisters were all 60 ft. square save one which was 48 ft., and the alleys varied from 5 ft. to 10 ft. in width. In three cases the buildings on the first

¹ *Wilts. Collections*, 143, 144, and 145.

² *Yorkshire Arch. Journ.*, ix, 197-215, and 321-33.

floor covered the alleys. The chapter-houses were very small, one being only 12 ft. by 8 ft., but they were always next the church on the east side of the cloister. The dormer always occupied the whole of the east side of the cloister on the first floor. The frater was in its usual position on the side of the cloister opposite to the church, but it only remained, and that in a contracted form, in three cases and in the other two it had been converted into a garner. The west side of the cloister was in all cases occupied by the prioress's lodging, the guest-hall, and a parlour. The kitchen was of various sizes placed at the lower end of the hall, and in one case there were two kitchens, but the second was only 8 ft. square.

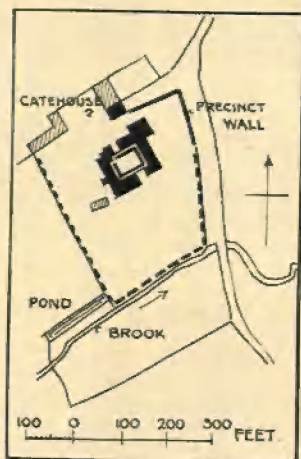


Fig. 4. Kington priory, plan of precinct.

The warming-house is nowhere mentioned, but it seems to have been supplanted by a parlour with a fireplace, and this is generally in the western range. The infirmary is also omitted as the legitimate use of the place had apparently died out, and one of the various chambers was doubtless used in cases of sickness.

The priest's room occurs in two cases, in one it follows the list of farm buildings and in the other it was actually without the gates. A corrody occurs in one instance, and the chamber allotted to the recipient was over the kitchen.

Besides the buildings round the cloister there were generally a brew-house with a bulting-house, and a bakehouse near the kitchen, though in one case the former were beneath the frater. There was also an outer court entered by the gatehouse and surrounded by stables, cow or ox houses, hay and corn barns, and other outhouses. There was generally a dovecot.

THE PRECINCT.

The precinct at Kington seems to have contained only some three acres, and part of the enclosing wall remains with its stone coping on the east and north. The site of the gatehouse is not clear. On the south side is a large brook, and outside the west side of the precinct is a fish-pond (fig. 4).

The farm buildings seem to have been where they are now on the north side of the precinct outside the wall.

THE CHURCH.

The church was on the north side of the cloister, but nothing is standing and its foundations have not yet been traced. The western part stood until about the middle of the eighteenth century, but the eastern parts with St. James's

chapel had gone in Aubrey's time. Writing in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1803, John Britton says that 'a very large circular arch that belonged to the chapel yet remains; but the site of this sacred building is now occupied by pig-sties'.¹ A capital of mid-twelfth century date belonging to a doorway was dug up some years ago and probably belonged to the church.

The chapel of St. James was doubtless a side chapel on the north side of the presbytery similar to the Lady chapel at Lacock.

THE CLOISTER.

The cloister was $57\frac{1}{2}$ ft. from east to west by $54\frac{1}{2}$ ft. from north to south, but nothing of the alleys remains, except a short length of the weathering over the lean-to roof at the north-west angle. None of the surrounding buildings oversets the alleys like the majority of the Yorkshire examples.

THE EASTERN RANGE.

The east side of the cloister was occupied by a range of building $14\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide of which the foundations have been traced.

The lower storey was divided by a cross wall 2 ft. thick at $22\frac{1}{2}$ ft. from the north end. In the west wall next the church was an opening apparently for the stairs to the upper floor, and there was a second opening south of the cross wall. The northern division from its position must have been the chapter-house, the size of which, 19 ft. by $14\frac{1}{2}$ ft., compares very favourably with the Yorkshire examples. The southern division was 30 ft. long, and the northern end was probably parted off to form a passage through the range to the cemetery on the east. The south end of the range stands to a considerable height and retains its original quoins at the south-east angle. The eastern half of the south wall is occupied by a large fireplace with a wooden head which indicates that this chamber was the warming-house. As already shown, the warming-house seems in nunneries to have become before the Suppression a regular parlour where the inmates might sit and work in bad weather.

The upper floor of the range was the dormer of the nuns in connexion with which must have been a rere-dormer, but no remains of this have been found up to the present.

THE FRATER.

The south side of the cloister does not seem to have been occupied by a continuous range of building in the usual manner. A building apparently occupied the eastern end for about 14 ft., but the site is covered by pigsties and

¹ *Gentleman's Mag.*, lxxij, 717.

cannot be excavated. From the western end of this building for some 10 ft. the cloister wall retains its original stone coping. The western part of the south side of the cloister is occupied by a two-storied building 25 ft. from east to west by $17\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide, which appears to date from the thirteenth century. Towards the eastern end of this building are the remains of a segmental-headed doorway leading from the cloister to the upper floor (pl. xxxiii, fig. 1).

This upper floor was the frater of the convent. It had a square-headed window to the west of the entrance over the cloister roof, now blocked, and a square-headed loop in the east wall. The south wall, for two-thirds its length, is thickened out to $5\frac{1}{2}$ ft. and seems to have contained the pulpit. A roughly constructed roof of fifteenth-century date with cambered and chamfered tie-beams remains above the building. There must have been a serving-hatch or doorway in the west wall from the kitchen.

The room below retains the jambs of an original doorway at the west end and a small square-headed loop in the east wall. In the block under the pulpit a large fireplace has been inserted, the jambs and head of which have since been removed. The original use of the room was doubtless a cellar in connexion with the kitchen, but if the fireplace was monastic its use must have been changed.

THE KITCHEN.

The kitchen was to the west of the frater so as to be convenient for that place and the guest-hall; but nothing of it remains but a small square window in a piece of the south wall next the frater and a four-centred moulded doorway in the north wall. The site is covered by a two-storied building of the eighteenth century.

THE WESTERN RANGE.

The whole of the west side of the cloister was covered by a range of building which continued northward in front of the west end of the church and measures 60 ft. in length by $17\frac{1}{2}$ ft. in width. The main walls and the roof stand almost as the nuns left them and form an interesting group of buildings (pl. xxxiii, fig. 2).

At the south end of the range is a chamber $12\frac{1}{2}$ ft. from north to south with a two-light cusped window in the west wall where in Aubrey's time were the arms of Bodenham. It was doubtless the buttery, and had originally, as now, a passage cut off its east end to communicate from the kitchen to the guest-hall.

Over the buttery and passage is a room with a fireplace in the south wall

and the remains of a similar window to that below in the west wall. This room is apparently that which Aubrey says was the priest's room, and it must have been gained by a flight of steps next the passage.

Northward of the buttery the range was occupied by the guest-hall 31 ft. in length. This was open to the roof, which had tie-beam principals like the frater and curved wind-braces under the purlins. The south end is occupied by a passage 6 ft. wide which in a normal arrangement was placed behind the screens at the lower end of the hall; but recently a wide fireplace with chamfered jambs has been found backing upon the western half of the passage. This is probably an original arrangement and is an exact counterpart of the fourteenth-century guest-hall at Birkenhead Priory. The hall is now lighted by two seventeenth-century windows and divided by a floor into two stories, but in Aubrey's time it retained a pair of original two-light pointed windows. The passage is entered from the west by a four-centred moulded doorway and seems to have had a small doorway opposite into the cloister.

The entrance is protected by a low porch having an open archway with a modern head, and it retains its original roof of arched rafters. Built into the gable over the archway is a twelfth-century beast's head exactly similar to the label terminals of the main arcades at Malmesbury.

At the north end of the hall is a room 12 ft. from north to south in which there was a fireplace in the south wall; but the original window in the west wall has been destroyed. In this window were the arms of Bodenham with a mitre crest and Bodenham quartering gules three bars chequy argent and sable, as noticed by Aubrey. The room was probably connected with the hall by a small doorway and was used as a guest-chamber or parlour. Opposite the entrance from the hall was another doorway into a room to the north.

This room is beyond the line of the range and measures 10 ft. from north to south by $8\frac{3}{4}$ ft. wide. In the west wall is a four-centred doorway from without; but the other original arrangements have been destroyed. Along the north wall must have been a garderobe pit, and there was doubtless a garderobe in the room itself. Outside the hall and parlour are three buttresses each of two sets-off.

Eastward of the garderobe is a chamber, $13\frac{3}{4}$ ft. from east to west by 10 ft. wide, placed along the north side of the cloister. This room has in the east wall a pointed doorway from without and a three-light Tudor window in the north wall. On the south side is a slight projection in which is a tall four-centred doorway with a rebate for a door opening inwards. The room formed the entrance to the prioress's lodging and was from its position used as an outer parlour for interviewing visitors.

The doorway in the south wall entered a large vice $7\frac{1}{2}$ ft. in diameter, that

is contained in a square turret occupying the north-west angle of the cloister, and leads to the upper floor.

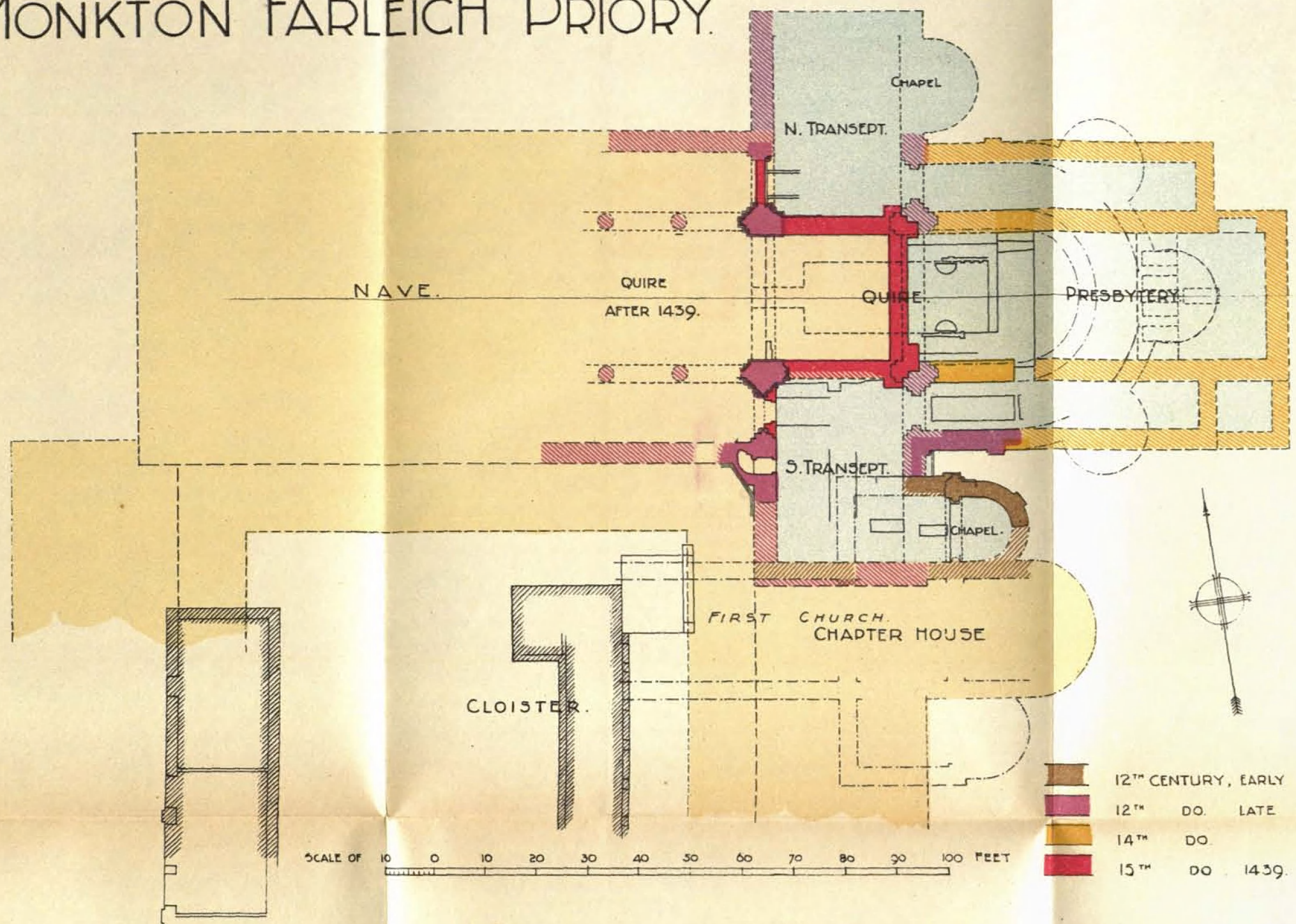
The upper floor, over the guest-chamber, garderobe, and outer parlour was the prioress's lodging. The room over the guest-chamber has an original fireplace in the south wall, a two-light cusped window in the west wall, and a four-centred arched doorway at the east end of the north wall. The entrance from the vice was in the middle of the east wall, but the original doorway has been destroyed. The roof is of the same character as that over the hall. The little doorway in the north wall was the entrance to the garderobe, which has an original cusped loop in the west wall; but its other arrangements have been removed.

The room over the outer parlour was apparently entered from the top of the vice and was the prioress's bed-chamber. It has a two-light Tudor window in the north wall, and a small square window with moulded jambs and head in the east wall which has stone window seats.

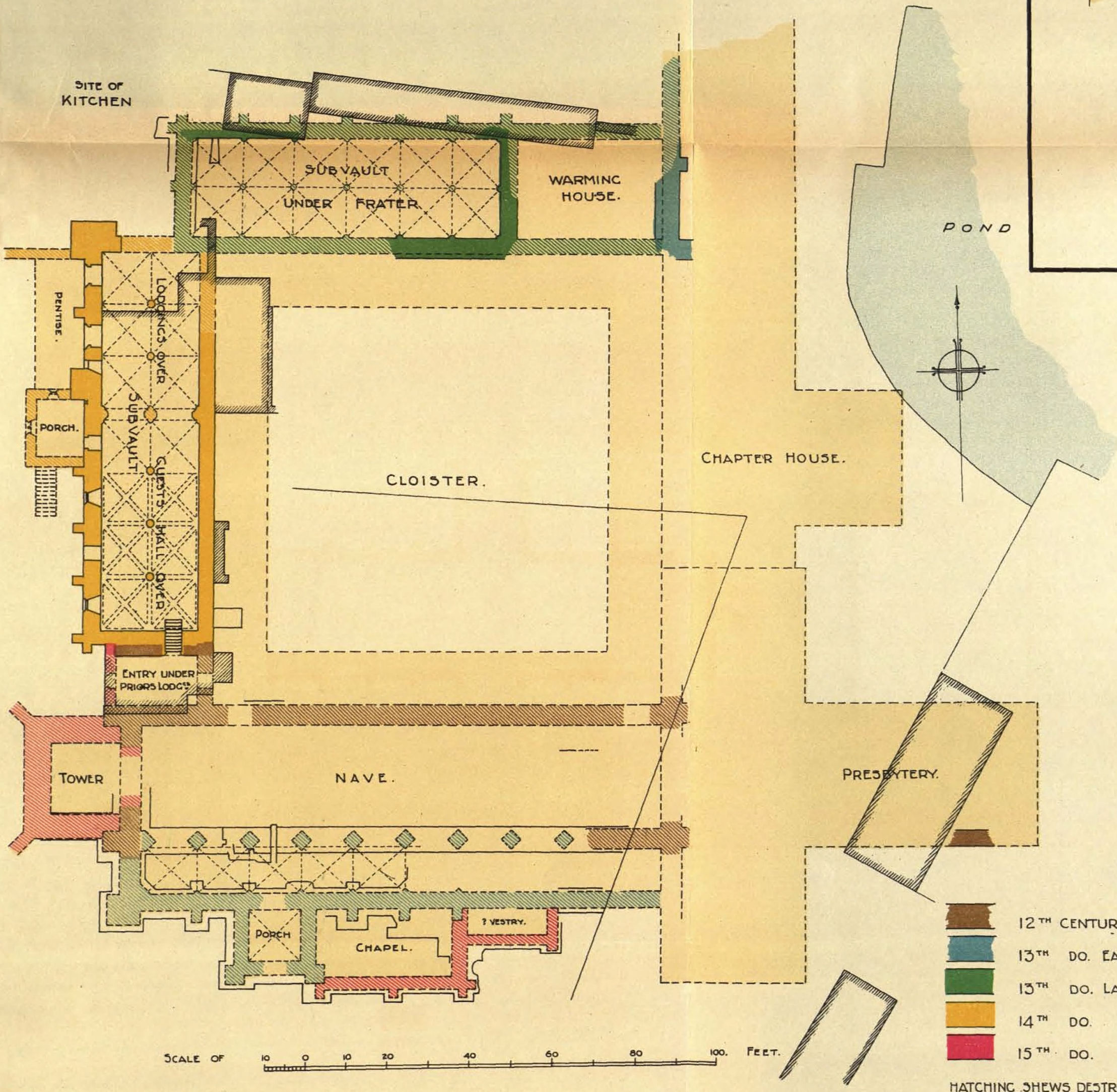
Between the outer parlour and the west end of the church was an entrance to the cloister of which the western jamb remains.

The royal corrody house within the priory of Kington seems to have been of early foundation, though its origin is unknown. The house was being rebuilt in 1221 at the charge of the king, and the Close Rolls contain a number of orders for the supply of timber and money for this purpose. The corrody was for two eleemosynary girls to reside therein at the king's pleasure, and there are grants of money to the prioress for their maintenance during 1221 and the two following years. No sign of this house remains, and the corrody seems to have lapsed long before the suppression.

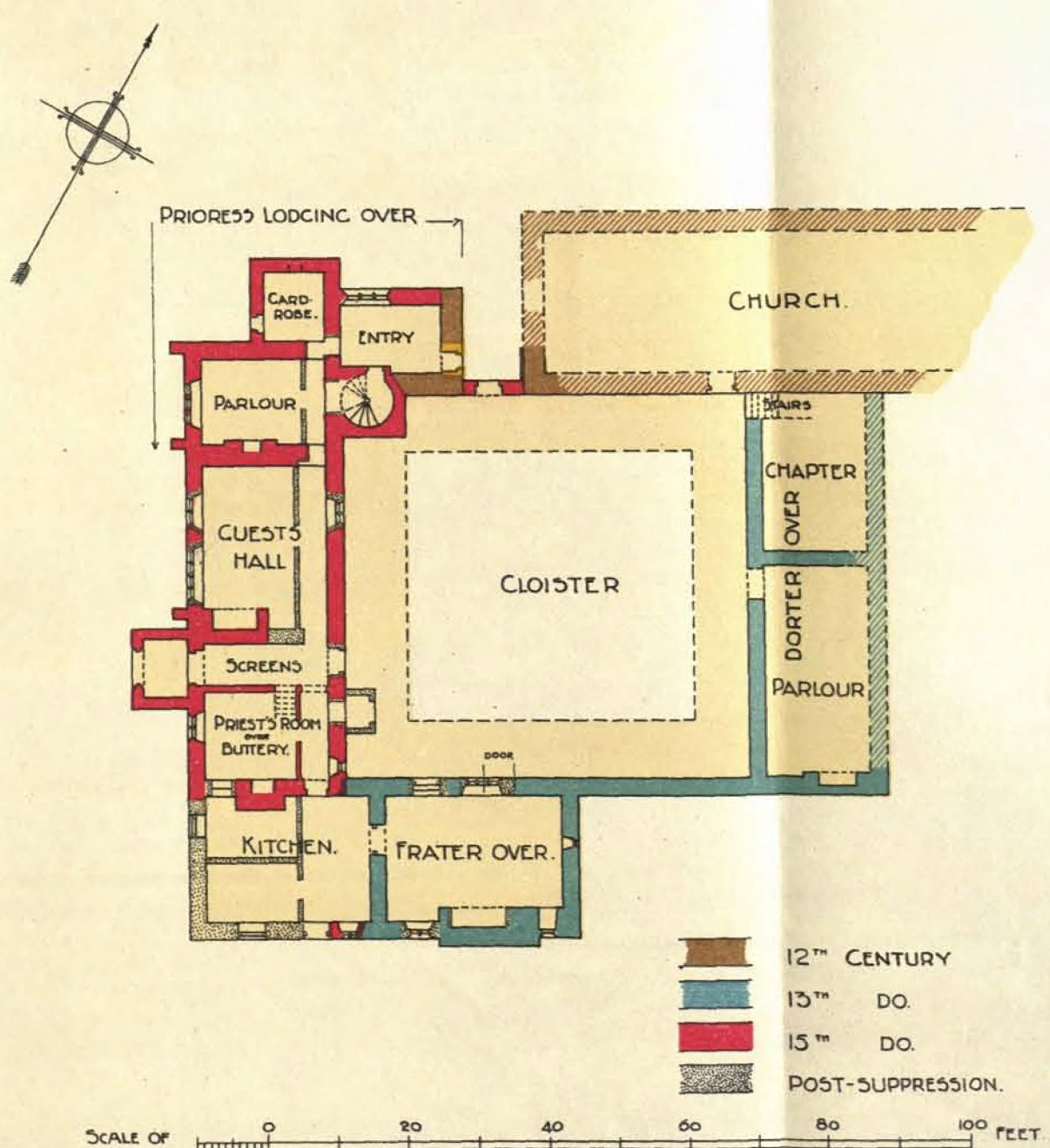
MONKTON FARLEICH PRIORY.



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Harold Brakspear, F.S.A.
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